Eric Johanson - Burn It Down (2017)

1 Burn It Down 6:26 2 She's In Control 3:38 3 Bang Against The Wall 3:30 4 Graveyard Queen 5:01 5 4 In The Morning 4:48 6 Live Oak 5:45 7 Till We Bleed 5:47 8 The Fugitive 3:57 9 Oh Louisiana 6:01 10 So Cold 3:30 11 On My Own 4:26 Eric Johanson - Vocals, Guitar Corey Duplechin - Bass Tab Benoit - Drums, Backing guitar

Guitarist/vocalist Eric Johanson has the right to sing the blues. He was a fixture in the music scene of Louisiana for years, but emigrated to New Zealand in 2006 after he lost everything he owned when Hurricane Katrina destroyed the home he established in New Orleans.

Born and raised in a musical family, Johanson possesses a beautifully rich voice that plays off well against his down-and-dirty six-string sound. His maternal grandfather was a piano tuner and jazz clarinetist, his grandmother was a pianist who sung in church choirs and aunts played cello and bass. His paternal grandfather owned a music store, and Eric started playing guitar at age five.

Eric began jamming in the Crescent City at age 15 after playing with a band at home two years earlier, frequently traveling from his home in Alexandria, and he lived in the big city for several years before tragedy struck. He returned the U.S. in 2010, quickly reestablishing himself in the bands of a trio of legends — Cyrill Neville, Terrance Simien and Corey Henry's Treme Funktet.

"Cyril taught me a ton about New Orleans history, culture and music – especially funk," he says. "When I started with Terrence, I didn't know much about zydeco music, despite growing up in it."

The album remains blues-based despite not built on traditional structure, Johanson notes. “While it was my intention to make a ‘blues’ record, Tab encouraged me to do more of the songs with something unique and different about them.”

A haunting guitar line opens “Burn It Down,” a Delta-infused lesson that deals with Eric having nothing left to lose as he weeds elements from his life that are holding him back as he works to set new, healthier goals. The music percolates under the lyrics and builds tension throughout. The sound brightens and tempo quickens for “She’s In Control,” a rocker that describes a woman who enters a bar in overdrive and makes the singer high for no reason. He quickly realizes she’s in full control of his personal demons.

The rhythm section opens the powerfully autobiographical “Bang Against The Wall” in which Johanson states that he was born restless and that nothing has changed in a life dealing with high hopes and plenty of frustration, while “Graveyard Queen,” a slow blues co-written with Benoit, paints a dark picture of a woman who leaves a path of destruction as she dances slowly, leaving people she touches wary of trusting anyone again.

The funky “4 In The Morning” describes being in a barroom and not wanting to go home, while “Live Oak” is an image-filled message about life in the South. It cautions to watch your step because the roots run deep. A repetitive eight-note riff drives “Till We Bleed,” which describes a relationship that needs to undergo a major change.

Johanson puts an interesting spin on unconditional love in “The Fugitive” – the singer’s a man on the run who’s taken in by a lady willing to give him a second chance at life — before the only cover number in the set, “Oh Louisiana,” written by Charles Edward Anderson and first recorded by Chuck Berry, gets a major makeover as it sings praises for The Pelican State. The funky “So Cold,” which describes the end of a romance, is up next before “On My Own” gives space for Eric to reflect on his past as he realizes he’s got to build his own dreams going forward.

Aurally different and available through most major retailers, Burn It Down is a winner on all counts. It’s bluesy, modern and full of interesting themes. True blues for modern times.
---Marthy Gunther, bluesblastmagazine.com

download (mp3 @320 kbs):

yandex mediafire uloz.to solidfiles global.files workupload

back